

Hope in Perilous Times, Part 3 - Acts 20:7-16 – May 17th, 2009

- This chapter is perhaps one of the best chapters we could possibly be in because of the times in which we are now living in.
- It probably goes without saying, but we are undoubtedly living in what God's Word describes as; "perilous times." It's not near, it's here!
- It's for this reason I've title this series; "Hope in Perilous Times." Today we'll begin part three after briefly reviewing parts one and two.
- We've been studying about what happened then, and what it means for us now, because in it we can find great hope to face the future.

1. Be Encouraged (Verses 1-2)

- Paul sets out for Macedonia after encouraging the disciples, then speaks "many words of encouragement to the people," in that area.

2. Be Patient (Verse 3a)

- Here Paul patiently stays in Greece for three months because of a plot against him, and during this time he writes the book of Romans.
- Even more interestingly, we read about how depressed he was during this three month period in his letters to the church of Corinth.

3. Be Prudent (Verse 3b)

- After a three month delay, Paul prudently decides to back through Macedonia instead of going to Syria. He's not paranoid, he's prudent.

4. Be Together (Verses 4-5)

- Luke, by the Holy Spirit, records this list of men who are sent together on ahead to Troas where they will wait for the Paul to arrive.
- I believe the main reason for this was because these men needed to be together and stay together for their own safety and protection.

5. Be Flexible (Verse 6)

- We're told it took them five days to sail from Philippi to Troas but, in Acts 16:11 they made this trip in the other direction, in just one day.
- This would indicate their journey was rough sailing! Perhaps the Holy Spirit wants to use this to teach us to be flexible in perilous times.

6. Be Comforted (Verses 7-12)

7 On the first day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight. 8 There were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were meeting. 9 Seated in a window was a young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep as Paul talked on and on. When he was sound asleep, he fell to the ground from the third story and was picked up dead. 10 Paul went down, threw himself on the young man and put his arms around him. "Don't be alarmed," he said. "He's alive!" 11 Then he went upstairs again and broke bread and ate. After talking until daylight, he left. 12 **The people took the young man home alive and were greatly comforted.**

v7-8 Knowing he was leaving on Monday, Paul keeps on talking until Midnight on Sunday, and the candle-lights were warming the room.
v9 When Paul talks on and on, a young man named Eutychus sinks into a deep sleep and falls through a three story window to his death.
v10-11 Paul throws himself on him and says; "don't be alarmed, He's alive!" They all go upstairs and eat and Paul talks till the morning.
v12 After Paul leaves Monday morning, the people took Eutychus home alive, and we're told that they were "greatly comforted."

- Again, why do we have this detail recorded for us? Couldn't Luke have just written that Paul was long winded and talked all night long?
- I suggest to that the Holy Spirit wants us to know about this dramatic life and death event so we could see our need to be comforted.
- This is so apropos for us today in the perilous times in which we live. We can take comfort knowing; He's alive! Not Eutychus, Jesus!

2 Corinthians 1:3-7 3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. 5 For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows. 6 If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. 7 And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort. NIV

John 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; KJV

John 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. KJV

John 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. KJV

7. Be Strong (Verses 13-14)

13 We went on ahead to the ship and sailed for Assos, where we were going to take Paul aboard. He had made this arrangement because he was going there on foot. 14 When he met us at Assos, we took him aboard and went on to Mitylene.
v13-14 Luke, who now joins them, tells us that they sailed for Assos, so they could pick up Paul because he walked the 25 miles instead.
- This is interesting, why would Paul send them on ahead by ship and choose to walk from Troas to Assos instead of sailing with them?
- One thought is that Paul was compassionate and concerned for Eutychus and wanted to make sure that he was ok before leaving.

"The Apostle stayed till the last possible moment, probably to be assured of Eutychus's complete restoration to consciousness and health, and then took a shortcut by land to join the ship at Assos."

F.F. Bruce

- Also, is it me or is Paul not getting any sleep here? He preaches all night in Troas, leaves in the morning, then, here he walks 25 miles.
- Listen, if I'm Paul, I'm sleeping, not walking! Again, perhaps this is here for us to see how it is that we can be strong in perilous times.
- When Paul writes the epistle to the church in Philippi, he sort of gives us insight into how he was able to be strong and press on.

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. NKJV

Psalm 31:24 Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the LORD. NIV

2 Timothy 2:1 You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. NIV

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. NIV

"By these descriptions of Paul's activity we are taught to be active and energetic for our Lord. We can never do enough for him to whom we owe our all."

Charles Spurgeon

8. Be Diligent (Verses 15-16)

15 The next day we set sail from there and arrived off Kios. The day after that we crossed over to Samos, and on the following day arrived at Miletus. 16 Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus **to avoid spending time in the province of Asia, for he was in a hurry to reach Jerusalem, if possible, by the day of Pentecost.**

v15 They arrive of Kios, the day after cross over to Samos, then the following day arrive at Miletus. That is three places in three days.

v16 Paul decides to sail past Ephesus so as to avoid spending time there because he was in a hurry to reach Jerusalem by Pentecost.

- It's not that he didn't want to see them it's that he couldn't have just a short visit with them. Clearly, Paul is being very diligent here.
- He knows to give into the urgent means he won't make progress in the important. Diligence is absolutely imperative in perilous times.

1 Timothy 4:15-16 15 Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. 16 Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers. NIV